



Worksites

How Can We Decrease Childhood Overweight in Utah?

In 2006, Governor Jon M. Huntsman, Jr. released the *Utah Blueprint to Promote Healthy Weight in Children, Youth, and Adults*. The goal and objectives below are taken from that document. The document is available at <http://www.health.utah.gov/obesity/docs/obesityblueprint.pdf>.

GOAL: Utah's employers will assume an active role in addressing adult obesity and childhood and youth overweight.

Objective: Increase the number of businesses that support and promote healthy eating and physical activity at the worksite.

- Use Governor Huntsman's Work Well Recommendations for state agencies.
- Obtain continuing education for worksite wellness staff through attendance at the Utah Council for Worksite Health Promotion Conferences.
- Participate in the Healthy Worksite Awards Program.
- Use health risk assessments to tailor programs to their employees' needs.



Objective: Increase promotion and support in the workplace for mothers who are breastfeeding.

- Implement policies that support breastfeeding.
- Educate employers, mothers, and their families about breastfeeding and how to support breastfeeding mothers at work.

Examples of Success:

Salt Lake Valley Emergency Communications Center: VECC's Wellness Council promotes health to its employees in a variety of ways. One of the most beneficial ways has been through the 12-week employee challenges, which have included weight loss, smoking cessation, running a marathon, and walking 50,000 steps a week. VECC itself has also seen some impressive results in a lowered insurance rate increase which, in 2007, was half of what it was in 2006. VECC attributes part of this success to healthier employees due to a healthier work environment that also promotes a healthy lifestyle even when employees are away from work.

ARUP Laboratories: Named one of Utah's best companies to work for in 2006, ARUP Laboratories promotes healthy lifestyle and weight management to its employees. ARUP has an on-site Employee Health Clinic, a Preventive Medical Program, on-site wellness programs (such as Weight Watchers at Work), an on-site cafeteria that emphasizes healthy eating, and a Wellness Center with trained staff available 24-hours a day. For those employees who find it difficult to find time to work out, the company holds 15-minute exercise breaks, which are held during the employee daily break times.

WesTech Engineering (WTE): WTE actively promotes worksite wellness. WTE provides paid time for employees to exercise and to participate in wellness luncheons and meetings, including Weight Watchers and other weight loss programs. Employees get a financial incentive for losing weight, running a 5k, getting a physical, seeing the dentist and many other things. WTE has changed the contents of vending machines and break rooms to provide healthier food options, and encourages employees to walk every day. WTE has seen a decrease in the amount of money spent on insurance

Examples of Success (continued):

each year: in 2006 the company received \$180,000 from the shared insurance plan instead of paying \$150,000.

Vacation Resorts International: Vacation Resorts International has made several changes in the workplace to improve employee wellness. These changes include a yearly “Walk to the Resorts” physical activity challenge, employee participation in establishing a gym which is used regularly, and replacing some of the non-healthy snacks in vending machines with healthier items.

Utah Transit Authority (UTA): At UTA, workers earn up to \$250 annually for participating in fitness evaluations, disease management consultations, preventive doctor exams, and walking groups. The money is deposited into a Health Reimbursement Account, and can be used for medical expenses or saved until retirement. UTA also boasts ten fitness rooms at facilities from Ogden to Provo. Membership is free to employees and their spouses. UTA encourages employees to make good nutritional choices by including healthy foods in their vending machines.

How To Establish a Wellness Program at Your Utah Worksite:

The *Healthy Worksite Awards Program* recognizes the outstanding achievements of businesses in implementing employee health promotion and wellness programs. The Utah Council for Worksite Health Promotion promotes and gives the worksite awards to 50 or more business each year. During 2006, Regence BlueCross Blue Shield of Utah partnered with the Utah Department of Health and the Council to increase participation in Healthy Worksite Awards.

Resources:

Obesity in Utah. Utah Department of Health, Bureau of Health Promotion. This Web site contains a report on Obesity in Utah, the Utah Blueprint to promote healthy weight, and a breaking news section with the latest information on the obesity epidemic and interventions. Located at <http://health.utah.gov/obesity/>.

The Utah 2005 Worksite Wellness Survey Report: Measuring the Healthy People 2010 Objective. The report documents the results of a worksite wellness program survey that was conducted in Utah among medium- and large-sized companies. Located at <http://health.utah.gov/worksitewellness/>.

Utah Council for Worksite Health Promotion. This Web site is your local connection to worksite health promotion and wellness information in Utah. Located at <http://www.health.utah.gov/worksitewellness/>.

Governor Huntsman’s Work Well plan urges state agencies to implement eight recommendations, which are designed to create healthy environments at the workplace, making the healthy choice the easy choice for workers. Resources for Work Well in the workplace are located at www.healthyutah.org/workwell.

A Healthier You Legacy Awards program recognizes the efforts of college campuses, communities, schools, and worksites to increase opportunities for their constituents to participate in five health-enhancing areas: healthy behaviors, nutrition, physical activity, preventive services, and safety. The program, with input from many state and local experts, has developed site specific criteria for policies, infrastructure, and outcomes at bronze, silver, gold, and platinum levels. Information is located at www.health.utah.gov/ahy.

WELness COuncils of America (WELCOA). WELCOA helps orgnaizations of all kinds build and sustain results-oriented wellness programs. Located at <http://www.welcoa.org>.
